

## **PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD**

**MONDAY, AUGUST 11, 2003**

**3:00 P.M., J. MARTIN GRIESEL ROOM, CENTENNIAL PLAZA II**

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:00 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with members Bloomfield, Kirk, Senhauser, Sullebarger, and Wallace present. Absent: Clement, Kreider, Raser, and Spraul-Schmidt

### **PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW, 508-518 DANDRIDGE STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam presented the staff report on this preliminary design review for the construction of six single-family townhouses at 508-518 Dandridge, within the Over-the-Rhine Historic District.

Ms. Kellam stated that in 2000, the Board had reviewed a preliminary design (including a Section 106 Review) of the Pendleton Housing project for the construction of townhouses and housing rehabilitation on Spring, Pendleton and Dandridge Streets. That project has since been scaled back to include only the construction of six townhouses on Dandridge. The developer is no longer seeking public monies, therefore, a Section 106 Review is not required.

The design for the townhouses has not dramatically changed from the Board's initial review. The front façade will be predominately brick with metal projecting bays. Ms. Kellam outlined other changes from the original proposal. On the front elevation, the wrought iron gates and arched openings for the garage entrances have been eliminated and a four-panel garage door is now proposed. The entry bays now extend down to grade with a porch roof extending over the entry. The metal balcony railings have been modified, and the skylights and a second floor window have been eliminated on the rear elevation.

Ms. Kellam stated that the design generally meets the new construction guidelines for the historic district. She described three items to consider: 1) The elimination of the third floor windows on the rear destroys the bay system; 2) An additional third floor window on the side elevation would continue the pattern of the bay; and 3) Continuing the use of metal railings on the rear balcony would be preferable to the introduction of wood.

Project architect and applicant Joe Bodkin was present to address the Board. Mr. Bodkin presented a model of the townhouses, as initially proposed. He stated that they hope to include a retaining wall system in the rear that would allow them to incorporate walkouts rather than decks. Mr. Bodkin explained that they eliminated the third floor window on the rear elevation to accommodate a full shower in the bathroom at that location. For the same reason, they did not consider a window on the side elevation.

[Ms. Wallace joined the meeting]

Mr. Senhauser pointed out that because the design incorporates a multitude of materials for the overhangs, bays, and lintels, the introduction of a new material for the porch (wood) seems out of character with the rest of the building. Mr. Bodkin reiterated that the material will be of no consequence if they incorporate the walkouts. Mr. Senhauser suggested that they consider holding the place of a window on the third floor, without

duplicating a window, to continue the rhythm. In response to Mr. Kirk, Mr. Bodkin clarified that the foundation will be of rusticated stone or block.

### **BOARD ACTION**

Because this was a preliminary design review, no action was required by the Board.

### **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Monday, July 28, 2003 meeting were unanimously approved (motion by Sullebarger, second by Bloomfield).

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 400 READING ROAD, OVER-THE-RHINE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam presented the staff report on a Certificate of Appropriateness for modifications to previously approved plans for the rehabilitation of the building at 400 Reading Road. The building is a contributing resource to the Over-the-Rhine Historic District. Ms. Kellam explained that the owner purchased adjoining 402-404 Reading Road (also a contributing resource) and will eventually connect the buildings to accommodate six condos. The applicant will submit plans at a later date to connect the buildings and any changes for 402-404 Reading Road.

The design for 400 Reading Road was changed significantly enough to necessitate it being reviewed again by the Board. The proposed elevator tower and glass lobby entrance on the rear elevation were eliminated (given that an elevator at 402-404 Reading Road will eventually service all of the condos). The rear addition along Broadway, which was to be removed, will now be retained, and the design of the dormers was changed. The existing dormers on the front (south) elevation will be restored. New 3' high shed dormers with multi-paned windows are proposed for the west elevation. New 9' high shed dormers proposed for the east elevation will not be visible from the right-of-way. These dormers will lead to 5' x 10' decks with painted metal horizontal railings. Staff recommends the dormers and balcony railings color match with the roof shingles and the color of the roof be subdued.

Applicant/Architect Mark Gunther was present to respond to questions from the Board. Mr. Bloomfield questioned whether the deck could be lowered into the roof. Mr. Gunther explained that the design of the dormers was revised after discovering a clear span roof truss system. He did not want to cut into the existing truss since the old timber structure appearance would provide more marketability. In response to Ms. Wallace, Mr. Gunther stated they will distinguish the new dormers from the old with standing seam metal roofs. They intend to use a neutral palette and a natural finish on the metal, with a charcoal gray on the shingle and the painted portion of the construction.

Mr. Senhauser stated his concern is not that they are altering the roof by adding dormers, but that they are altering the ridge of an existing roof to such an extent it no longer looks like the same roof. Because it is in a basin, consideration should be given to the roof as a 5th façade as viewed from above. He said that if the dormer did not exceed the roof ridge, it would not be such an issue, because it would follow the logical rhythm of the roof. Mr. Gunther replied that he had not explored the option of recessing the decks, but his client wished to leave the existing weathered heavy timber components unaltered and left as a visible element of both lofts. Mr. Bloomfield stated that the 16' timbers could remain. Mr. Gunther replied that the proposed scheme did not alter any of the original trusses;

alternatives would require a new structure. He questioned which should take precedent, the view of the roofline looking into the basin or the integrity of the interior.

Mr. Senhauser acknowledged the need to market a new modern building. As proposed, however, he did not consider the eastern dormers consistent with the guidelines. Ms. Sullebarger added that the Board has no objection to adding dormers or roof decks (as has been done in historic districts), if they retain the profile of the roof.

**BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Sullebarger, second by Kirk) to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of roof dormers and decks at 400 Reading Road as per plans submitted with the following conditions:

- 1) Match the color of the siding on the dormers and the metal railing with the color of the roof shingles;
- 2) Choose a subdued color for the standing seam metal roof;
- 3) The height of the dormer should not exceed the ridge of the roof;
- 4) Accommodate the deck by a cutaway of the roof; and
- 5) Any revisions and final plans be reviewed and approved by the Urban Conservator prior to issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness and a building permit.

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
APPROVAL, AND ZONING VARIANCES, 3742 SACHEM AVENUE,  
COLUMBIA-TUSCULUM HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Adrienne Cowden presented the staff report on this request for a Certificate of Appropriateness and Environmental Quality approval for the construction of a two-family residence on the vacant lot at 3742 Sachem Avenue. The lot is within the Columbia-Tusculum Historic District and Environmental Quality-Hillside District No. 5 (EQ-HS No. 5) and is zoned R-3. Ms. Cowden stated that the lot has never been developed. The R-3 designation permits two-family homes.

Ms. Cowden described the house as being modeled after the Victorian era residences in the Columbia-Tusculum Historic District, and in particular, the large Stick style residence at 3710 Creighton Place.

The project builder Keith Rings, Vince Stamp of 3734 Sachem Avenue, and Steve Schreiber, Mr. Stamp's legal representative attended the pre-hearing conference. Mr. Stamp objected to the residence being a two-family, since there are none on Sachem Avenue. He was also concerned with stormwater drainage. Ben Young, President of the Columbia-Tusculum Community Council, was not present at the pre-hearing, but by letter requested that the Board table the application until the council could review the project. He indicated that the council could have comments to staff by August 18, 2003.

Staff received two additional written objections to the application. Benjamin and Yelena Wetherill of 3725 Sachem Avenue asserted that the proposed residence would be the first multi-family home on the street and it is too tall to fit into the character of the street. The second email was from Daniel Lloyd Jr. and Kellie Lloyd who reside and own two homes on Sachem Avenue. They were opposed to the two-family house and described it as an extremely disproportional building, which would obliterate their river and valley view.

They expressed the need for any construction to meet the applicable Environmental Quality guidelines.

In response to Mr. Bloomfield, Ms. Cowden confirmed that there are no two-family homes on Sachem Avenue, but there are a few multi-family residences on Tusculum and elsewhere in the historic district. Mr. Bloomfield said he was concerned that the Board is being asked to consider a 5-story building and zoning variances on a street of 2½-story residences. Ms. Cowden confirmed that B & I considers the proposed structure to be a five-story building,

Mr. Senhauser suggested that since the applicant is considering alternative designs, the Board should review the application as a preliminary design rather than for a Certificate of Appropriateness. The other alternative would be to table the application. The applicant was amenable to having their application heard as a preliminary design review, noting that they have made changes in response to the pre-hearing.

Owner/applicant Tom Garber and project builder Keith Rings were present to address the Board. Mr. Garber disagreed with B & I's determination that the proposed design is a 5-story building. He showed revised plans for a 35' high base structure (which is permissible without a variance) and asked for a variance for the extra height of the stair tower, which he said is reflective of the high Victorian character of the area. Mr. Garber pointed out that roof heights of the 2-½ story buildings next door (3734 and 3732 Sachem) are equal to theirs.

In response to Ms. Sullebarger, he stated that the front yard setbacks of the two new neighboring houses were dictated by scenic view easements; his proposal does not require a variance for the front yard. Mr. Garber stated the side yard setbacks on his revision are 8' and 10'. The adjacent building has 4' setbacks and there was an easement granted to them for the driveway that gave them the 10' necessary for their side yard. Mr. Garber contended the drainage problem on his lot was created when the new residence at 3734 was constructed. Ms. Sullebarger commented that their revision would still require side yard variances, even though it is being constructed on an oversize lot. Mr. Rings replied that the only variance he understood was necessary for their revision was for the tower height. Mr. Garber added that there are rental properties on the street, that there are numerous two-family units on Tusculum, and there is a nearby six-unit condominium on Creighton Place.

Mr. Senhauser questioned if side and rear yard averaging was done in calculating the required setbacks. Ms. Cowden stated that B & I considered it for the side yards, but the variances are still necessary. Urban Conservator Forwood explained that required side yard setbacks are increased by 5' for each story above two. Mr. Rings commented that he did not believe the tower is excessive for the neighborhood and that the feature is not visible when approaching from the bottom of the street. Mr. Bloomfield suggested that they consider a hydraulic elevator; the tower would not have to be as tall, since the mechanics are housed below.

Mr. Senhauser pointed out that the R-3 zoning designation allows for a two-family home on the site. The fundamental issues are the overall balance, scale, rhythm and proportion of how this house relates to the site and street. Therefore, consideration should be given to the applicable historic and hillside guidelines. If the design meets these guidelines and requires deviation from the Zoning Code, variances could be considered. Mr. Kirk

agreed that the two-family only becomes an issue if it takes the building out of scale. Mr. Rings remarked that the mass of their residence as proposed is more proportional than the extreme mass and scale of 3732 and 3734 Sachem, which tower over their neighbor by 35'. He added that if the tower element adversely affects the building site, they will eliminate it.

Mr. Senhauser recognized additional speakers wishing to address the Board.

- Mr. Carroll Roberts, 3749 Sachem Avenue, stated his primary concern was with the mass. Mr. Roberts distributed pictures of other homes in the district and described the homes on the street as small to medium-sized. He felt a comparison should not be made between the proposed residence and the two newly built homes that are inappropriate for the neighborhood.
- Mr. Garret Walker, 3724 Sachem Avenue, requested that a 3-D superimposed picture be presented for the next meeting so everyone can see how the new building would appear within the context of the neighborhood. He presented a drawing he prepared showing that the proposed residence is set forward of the lot relative to adjacent homes. He agreed that the adjacent new homes should not be used for comparison.
- Bill Scott of 3752 Sachem expressed concern with drainage and stated that the problem was not due to the construction of 3734 Sachem. In addition, he said the applicants have presented nothing to show how they are going to resolve the issue. He stated the house is too massive and objected to comparing it to 3710 Creighton Place or the adjacent home. He also believed his and others' views would be obstructed and considered parking an issue.
- Vince Stamp, 3734 Sachem, who attended the pre-hearing, stated that without seeing the revisions prior to the Board meeting, he was unable to comment on them. In addition, he stressed that the Board was not obligated to grant variances, particularly if the construction is uncharacteristic of the EQ or historic district. Even if variances were not required, the Board would still have to consider the EQ district guidelines particularly since views will be obstructed. He also emphasized that the drainage issue will have to be addressed by the appropriate City entity since he felt it could pose a danger to children in the neighborhood.
- Mark Godbey, attorney for Daniel and Kellie Lloyd, 3716 and 3748 Sachem, stated his clients' primary concerns were with views. The applicant is requesting a 17' total side yard setback vs. the 44' required – a significant difference and too close for comfort. He requested that the developer provide him with drawings so he can review the revisions prior to the next meeting. Mr. Godbey referenced City Ordinance 460-1979 that established the EQ-HS No. 5, which indicates that buildings should be designed to be harmonious with structures, to respect views from other buildings, and retain and respect historic site features. He concluded that the house does not belong on the street.
- Ms. Arlene Golembiewski, 3723 Sachem, stated she had little opportunity to review the proposal and wanted to ensure that the any resulting decisions would be consistent with the guidelines, since she believed the four newly constructed houses on Sachem do not conform with the guidelines. She objected to the focus on variances, when it should be on whether the proposal meets the intent of the

guidelines. In addition, she stated that historic buildings in the neighborhood should be used as a primary reference. In response to Ms. Golembiewski asking for clarification, Mr. Senhauser explained that B & I determines the height of a structure by considering the face of the house as it fronts the public right-of-way. If the structure sits on a 12' garage which faces the street, that 12' is included in the total calculated height.

Mr. Rings explained for Mr. Bloomfield that the third floor is for storage. The elevator does not go to the third level. The upper levels house the elevator's mechanics. Mr. Rings acknowledged concerns with drainage and stated they would address it. Ms. Sullebarger stated that staff can consult with Stormwater to ensure the problem is sufficiently resolved.

Mr. Kirk suggested that the applicant meet with the B & I's zoning staff to address their issues prior to the next Board meeting.

### **BOARD ACTION**

Because this item was considered as a preliminary design review, no official action was required by the Board; however, in an effort to provide direction, Mr. Senhauser summarized relevant issues:

- There are legitimate concerns over the relative scale and massing;
- Single family vs. two family is an issue only as it relates to size;
- Consideration should be given to the view of the uphill property owner;
- Stormwater Management should be consulted regarding stormwater-related issues of the site;
- Balance, scale, rhythm, and proportion as derived from structures in the Columbia-Tusculum Historic District are fundamental design issues. Victorian tendencies and are heavily articulated in windows and doors being taller than wide, with a ratio of greater than 2 to 1, which carries through from floor to floor. It is also a neighborhood of porches where Gothic-related porch detail is also seen; and
- The oversized lot should relate to the neighborhood fabric (which has smaller lots) with the same balance, rhythm, scale and proportion.

### **PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW, 119 MULBERRY STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Applicant Guy Humphrey summarized the project at 119 Mulberry Street, a contributing resource within the Over-the-Rhine Historic Local Historic District and the National Register Historic District. Owner Cathy Frank was also in attendance.

Mr. Humphrey described the c. 1870-1880 2½-story brick Italianate residence as a shell in very bad shape. They are proposing to add 3' in height to the third floor to make it functional as a bedroom. The existing dilapidated porch is to be removed and a 2-story wood frame addition will be constructed on the east elevation. The main door on Mulberry will be modified into a window opening and the primary entrance moved to the new side (east) addition. The plan includes demolishing the rear of the building and rebuilding it in the same footprint. Mr. Humphrey recognized that the plan involves substantial changes, but considered them necessary to make the project feasible. Their other alternative is to demolish the building.

Mr. Senhauser agreed that when a building has deteriorated to this point and altered to such an extent, one must question whether or not to save the building, although it does hold a place on the street. Given the existing rear addition and the proposed addition for the east elevation, the only remnant of the original structure is the brick façade with three bays. The Board concurred that retaining the central entrance would be critical in maintaining any of the original integrity. Mr. Humphrey agreed that the front door could remain.

Mr. Senhauser acknowledged the marketing necessity of adding a full third floor, but suggested that the applicant consider what could be done to strengthen or maintain the original integrity. He pointed out that at one time there was likely a substantial cornice. Ms. Frank commented that she would like to see a cornice there, and she would construct one that is appropriate. Mr. Humphrey explained that the drawing in the staff report shows a full height room; however, he anticipated he could keep the height of the new wall to a minimum by using a sloping ceiling. He added that as proposed, there will be only 1700 square feet of living space. Without the additional space provided by increasing the height of the third floor, they would likely not pursue the renovations.

The Board suggested keeping the original façade on the street and expanding the addition on the rear. Mr. Humphrey replied that the deck and view would be lost if the bedroom addition were moved farther to the rear. The Board concluded that they were more concerned how the additional space was added to the third floor, rather than if it was added. Mr. Senhauser suggested that consideration also be given to adding an additional opening in the center of the rear façade.

#### **BOARD ACTION**

Because this was a preliminary design review, no action was required by the Board.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting adjourned.

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William L. Forwood  
Urban Conservator

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John C. Senhauser  
Chairman

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Date